

# **Adams 14 School District**

**Board of Education**

**Management Partner Proposal**

**Presented by:**

**Norman F. Ridder**

**January 2019**

## Adams 14 School District – Board of Education

Sean Milner Executive Director of Finance & Operations

January 15, 2019

It is with pleasure that we present to you an outstanding candidate for the position of Management Partner for Adams 14 School district. You will find his background, expertise and training are exactly what you are seeking. He has a strong desire to partner with you to accelerate the academic improvement already underway.

As a servant leader, he evaluates how he can best serve the people he is called to lead.

As a turnaround expert in a school district of nearly 8,000 students with a 61% free/reduced lunch program, he developed a strategic plan and a foundation for a culture of improvement from the classroom to the boardroom.

- Created a plan for nurturing a high performing system
- Drove the change required to maintain a sharp focus for the future
- Implemented a model to ensure transparency of spending and operations
- Built community support
- Uncovered the unique desires and needs of students, parents, teachers and voters.
- Identified negative trends in teacher retention and provided support for the needs of teachers.
- Built a proactive student/adult behavior model focused on building a culture of learning for the home and classroom.

As a Superintendent in a district of 25,000 students, 3,336 employees, 53 schools with a budget of \$273 million, successfully drove

- Strategic Planning
- Capital Campaigns
- Program Development
- Community Interaction
- Professional Development
- Continuous Improvement
- Student Achievement

The attached resume gives greater detail into each of these areas and how successes were achieved. Also included, a plan for implementing: 1. Organizational Cultural Shift, 2. Instructional Transformation, 3. Leadership Development. As a Colorado resident this candidate looks forward to meeting with you and discussing how he may work with you to reach common goals.

Sincerely:

Pamela J. Devine

Executive Recruiting - Devine Recruiting Partners 720-971-0832 [pjcd356@gmail.com](mailto:pjcd356@gmail.com)

January 15, 2019

## SECTION 1 LETTER OF INTEREST

To Whom It May concern:

This is a letter of interest supporting a turnaround performance of the Adams 14 School District. We (Leadership Systems Consultant, L.L.C.) heard about District Adams 14 search for a team to manage their work as directed by the State Board of Education through local media. We are an experienced team who has served to support districts wanting improvement to serving dysfunctional districts needing a major shift in culture and overall performance. As a team a systemic/systematic analysis of the district will drive much of our work to shape a focused strategic plan rooted in a philosophy of high performance. We pride ourselves as leading research experts who are driven by the voice of the people a system serves. The focus of the work will be rooted in district baseline data developed by strategies unique to both the education and business sectors. These strategies will include an analysis of student and staff process and performance data. The research will also include an analysis of both the internal and external community of the Adams 14 School District. Human Center Design, classroom and home visits, phone and on-line surveys and focus groups will be some of the strategies used to build an understanding of the community served.

Once a baseline of data is developed the team will work with both internal and external community members to develop a three-to-five year plan of work. The team performing the initial work will consist of a team leader with experience serving as an examiner of high performance on the classroom, district office, school board and superintendent levels, a systems analyst trained in applied research and a systems developer. Once the baseline of understanding is established, additional team members will work the development and roll out of the plan.

Over the past fifteen years the leadership team has performed successful turn-around work with districts ranging from seventy-five hundred (7,500) to twenty-five thousand (25,000) students. The strategies for the research were very similar in each district but the ultimate focus of the work was totally different. Flexibility and alignment of the overall system is critical for success.

Throughout the process of analysis and development, all students, parents, staff and community members will be both informed and involved in the work. The key to our work is to recognize the power of the people served. A turnaround will happen through the work of the people served in the district. Every effort will be made to empower and serve the worker in an environment of high expectations.

## SECTION 2 - EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Proposed Personnel:

Main Point — Systems expert: Dr. Norman Ridder Resume- Attached

Research Lead: Marc Maness — Resume - Attached

Research Assistant: Mark Ellickson — Resume – Attached

Research Analyst: Mike Maness — Resume - Attached

Curriculum and Staff Development — named later

Process for Added Capacity: after the research is complete and a baseline is established a plan will be developed listing staffing needs including current staff. Recruitment of staff must support the needs of the strategic plan. Staffing could include — teacher specialists supporting diversity, behavior specialists



supporting student and adult behavior needs, Liaisons supporting the home and classroom and system specialists, etc.

All staff recruitment and hiring will work through the classroom teacher, building administrator, the student, parent and community member. The Adams 14 community must own all staffing positions.

**Organizational Experience:** Our organization is rooted in both an education and business improvement culture with the main point person serving as an educational leader from the classroom to the office of superintendent in Catholic, at risk and public school environments for over forty-five years. The other descriptions will follow.

**Organizational Structure:** We are a research/consulting firm working within an L.L.C. (Leadership Systems Consultant, L.L.C.). Each of our workers serve as private consultants responding to the main point person.

**Organization Theory of Action and Implementation:** Our team spends several months researching the various systems within an organization using the raw data of student and staff performance, parent engagement and community involvement, utilizing unique methods of research listening to the people served by the organization. The methods of research will include: human center design, phone surveys, on-line surveys, focus groups and an analysis of successful comparable systems,

After the research team establishes a baseline of understanding, a team of experts work with local experts (students, teachers, building administrators, central office, school board members and community representatives) to develop short- and long-term goals, indicators and action plans focusing on the empowerment of the student, teacher and building administrator rooted in high expectations.

The lead team will perform a regular (weekly to monthly) review of system performance charting the findings. System flexibility and alignment is critical for the system to respond to the performance/process data. A consistent analysis of performance will support sustainable performance. Most of the adjustments made will be adjustments to the system with minor adjustments to staffing,

Student, staff, parent and community satisfaction will be measured on a regular basis to ensure engagement and ownership of the overall work. Blame and fear will be driven from the system rooted in improvement of performance.

**Understanding of National, State, and Local Context:** The lead team has worked in Missouri under very similar requirements on the local, state and federal levels. The team will recruit experienced Colorado experts as the research points to what is needed. Their work will also compare their findings with similar districts who are successful. Some examples of similar districts may include the neighboring Mapleton School District and the Harrison School district in Colorado Springs. An example of a diverse school district served by members of the leadership team is the Special School District in St. Louis which serves over 25 school districts within the St. Louis community. Every district the team worked with called for intense work with employee organizational groups including teacher, classified and administrator groups.

**Organizational Capacity:** Our organization has worked in systems larger than the Adams 14 system.



Once the research is complete our organization works within the organization to align the work. Often a major realignment is needed. We maintain the philosophy of starting with a lean team and build a team of experts as the need dictates.

**Proposed Progress Monitoring System:** At the beginning our organization will work within the state data system. Ultimately, we will develop a user-friendly system (data warehouse) that will serve the classroom, the building, the classified and the community.

**Communication and Stakeholder Input:** Transparency is critical. An internal and external team will develop a communications plan that will build an understanding of the stakeholder. All communications will check for the system's ability to listen to its stakeholder on a day-to-day basis. Everyone in the community must hear the voice of the school system.

### SECTION 3 - SCOPE OF SERVICE

The Adams 14 School District serves the greater community of Commerce City and surrounding communities. For eight years the district has performed below state requirements for student and teacher performance. Some of the struggles that may cause a lack of performance is a low teacher retention rate and many students living within the district choosing to attend schools in other districts. What may be the greatest cause of low performance are the systems working within the Adams 14 School District? Students and staff may be working very hard without a focus on the needs of the community including families, students, teachers and the many businesses of the greater community. The district may be a dysfunctional system working under traditional K-12 education systems and state requirements.

The greatest challenge for the Adams 14 School District is to build a high performing system rooted in local, state and national requirements. The definition of local requirements is the most critical challenge for the district. The Leadership Systems Consultants, L.L.C. team will take a "Hands on" approach to build a baseline of data that will serve as a foundation for design work needed for strategic work. The team consist of both education and corporate leaders and research experts who provide a personal approach to research the community. The research work begins with one-on-one conversations (Human Center Design) with all stakeholder groups. Phone and on-line surveys, focus groups, site and classroom visits will continue to build a basic understanding of the community supporting the education of the children.

From the baseline data, the team will work with various representatives within the system to build a focused (two page) strategic plan consisting of vision, mission, goals, indicators and action plans. Every working system within the district will build their own strategic plan. The team will partner with current staff to develop strategies for improvement. These strategies for improvement will work within a culture of continuous improvement building flexible and aligned learning systems that drive out fear and blame.

A culture of improvement will nurture an appetite for engagement in the learning process. To build a

culture of improvement, staff will learn the systemic/systematic cycle of improvement rooted in day-today planning, doing, analysis and action. While building a system of improvement, the team will work with staff in shaping a routine analysis of systems including a review of staff placement, transfers, evaluations, recruitment and retention.

The team will do an analysis of the district School board system. The review will help the school board membership define their role in supporting the learning of each child. This analysis will align with the work provided to Steff and students in building a culture of continuous improvement. What is the vision, mission, goals, indicators and action plans of the school board?

A review of district policies and amendments will be part of the work of the school board as the team and school board perform an analysis of their system.

This analysis will include, an evaluation of current partnerships and recruit much needed services not offered by staff.

**Organizational Cultural Shift:** The primary work performed throughout this contract will be to build a culture of continuous improvement. This work hopes to shift from a system of controls to a system that empowers the worker from the student in the classroom to the school board table. Flexibility and alignment of all systems in the district is critical in building a culture of transformation. Many subcultures based in much diversity will enrich the work of every system by constantly listening to every voice within the system on a day-to-day basis. A regular monitoring of feedback in every system will drive out fear and blame and create an atmosphere of trust.

**Instructional Transformation:** After an analysis of the overall district system, a plan will be shaped to build a system of improvement rooted in high expectations. The system of improvement will build an alignment and flexibility within it that allows for talented staff to build their own system rooted in frequent planning, working, studying and adjusting their system. Once the system is in place best practices of instruction and assessment will support the work beginning on the classroom level, This transformation will be a thorough systemic/systematic process driven by an engaged workforce.

**Leadership Development:** An analysis of the district's overall leadership including an analysis of talent and the alignment of governance will lead the work of the team's strategy to build a culture of support for staff. Once an analysis is completed a plan will be developed to train leadership anchored in a culture of continuous improvement. By the way, this analysis of leadership includes teacher and student leadership.

#### SECTION 4 SCHEDULE

July 1, 2019 December 31, 2019:

The first six months of the team's work will include an assessment of systems from the school board to the classroom. The assessment will include all current assessments used over the last five years of the district and an analysis of the alignment of the system based on a continuous improvement system.

January 1, 2019 -July 1, 2020:

**Systems Training in Continuous Improvement:**

District leadership including school board, central office and building leadership will be trained in continuous improvement including coaching, assessment, and systems planning at every level of the district. Every leader will develop a mission, vision, goals, indicators and action plans for their systems engaging all their system stakeholders.



The Leadership team will perform an analysis of the district system to measure the overall improvement process for the district. The results of the assessment will be shared with everyone in the district.

July 1, 2020 -July 1, 2022:

Systems leadership training for staff who work directly with students. This training will include student leadership. Every staff member will transform their work to align with a systemic/systematic approach to learning. A constant review of district processes will be performed at least once a month.

July 1, 2022 -July 1, 2023:

The leadership team will build a trainer of trainer's approach to build a sustainable system. This trainer of trainers will include training leadership to become high performance examiners for the Baldrige system.

The district will continue to check for systems alignment and improvement of performance of staff and students. A data warehouse and dashboard will be shaped to serve a means to measure improvement with transparency.

#### SECTION 5- REFERENCES

1. Lynda Banwart  
417-540-3836  
lala@cableone.net
2. Sallie Beard  
417-529-9574  
Sallie.beard@gmail.com
3. Bruce Renner  
417-839-1732  
brucepat@sbcglobal.net
4. Larry Felton  
President, Missouri School Boards Association
5. J. Bradford Hodson  
417-625-9615  
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## Norman F. Ridder

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### Senior Executive – Mission/Systems Leadership

“As a humble servant leader, I evaluate how I can best serve the people I am called to lead. In education. This approach allows for a spirit of teamwork focused on the needs of the child.” - Norm Ridder

#### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Management – Organizational Development  
Consensus Building – Public Relations  
Cultural, Ethnic, and Economically Diverse Populations  
Industry Best Practices – Policy Making – Reform  
Education Systems Turnarounds – Strategic Planning  
Assessment – Accountability – Student Achievement  
Mill Levy Overrides – Bond Issues – Budgeting

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Visionary leader with a collaborative management style, student – focused philosophy, and proven record of achievement. High energy administrator with a personal commitment to excellence in education and extensive experience with diverse quality systems. Effective team player who values the freedom of the human spirit, engenders trust, and models high standards of integrity. Accomplished public speaker who knows how to work a crowd.

#### EDUCATION

##### Ed. D, ADMINISTRATION, CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION

University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

Dissertation – *The Religious Beliefs and Practices of Catholic Graduates of Catholic and Public High Schools in the State of Nebraska*

##### MASTER OF EDUCATION, SECONDARY EDUCATION

University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska

##### BACHELOR OF ARTS, PHILOSOPHY, THEOLOGY

St. Thomas College, Denver, Colorado

##### MASTERS OF THEOLOGY EQUIVARIANT FOR CATHOLIC DEACON ORDINATION

Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska

#### CERTIFICATIONS

- Endorsements – Superintendent of Schools, Principal, Teacher
- Professional, Administrative, Supervisory Certificate for K-12
- Baldrige Examiner Certificate

#### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

##### INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT, Joplin School District, Joplin, Missouri (2015-2017) Mehlville Public Schools, Saint Louis, Missouri (2014-2015)

Recruited as a turnaround expert to build a culture of improvement rooted in each community's desire to support its teachers and provide an outstanding education for its children. Collected performance data, researched the needs of the internal and external community, listened to stakeholders, and built a strategic focus for the district. Developed each district's strategic plan and created the foundation for a culture of improvement from the classroom to the boardroom. Led the selection of a permanent superintendent who could take the district to the next level.

**Joplin School District**, serves nearly 8,000 students with a 61% free/reduced lunch program and 1,286 staff members in 15 schools covering 70 square miles.

- Performed an analysis of the overall system, created a deployment plan for a nurturing, high-performing system, and drove the change required to maintain a sharp focus for the future.
- Implemented a new administrative management model that ensured transparency of spending and operations.
- Drove the election of new members to the Joplin board of Education and ensured they were aligned with the strategic plan. Led the board to become a functioning governing organization that was no longer fractured along party lines.



**PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE**

**Mehlville Public Schools**, a National School District of Character, serves 11,000 students in a growing urban community.

- Built community support for a levy increase to respond to deficit spending for the first time in 29 years.
- Used forums to uncover the unique desires and needs of students, parents, teachers, and voters. Initiated a feedback cycle to constantly drive improvement.
- Tuned into what the children truly want and need, and encouraged them to own their future, innovate, and take risks.
- Identified a negative trend in teacher retention, and provided support for the needs of teachers.

**SUPERINTENDENT (2005–2014)**

**Springfield R-12 Public Schools**, Springfield, Missouri

Recruited to re-invigorate one of the largest school districts in Missouri with 25,000 students, 3,336 employees, and 53 schools. Managed a \$273 million annual budget and \$2.96 billion in assets in a fiscally conservative manner. Focused on meeting the fundamental needs of each child and on challenging students to acquire the skills and knowledge to function in the world.

**Strategic Planning:**

- Drove the development and implementation of a new strategic plan that served as a roadmap for the future of public education in the district. Gathered input for the plan from thousands of citizen surveys, numerous focus groups, and meetings with business leaders, teachers, students, parents, and staff. Currently integrating 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into district curricula and instruction.
- Reduced bureaucracy in the old system, minimized top-down control, and promoted servant leadership.
- Acted as a driving force to unify and build consensus among the Board of Education, staff, and community in a dynamic political and cultural environment.
- Initiated and managed the involvement of school personnel, central administration, and instruction in district policy-making, strategic planning, and accountability.

**Capital Campaigns:**

- Developed and passed a \$71.5 million bond and an increase of 20¢ on a levy (\$6.4 million increase) in response to district growth. The district is developing a 5- to 10-year facilities plan targeting classroom size and technology.
- Spearheaded a successful \$50 million bond initiative in 2009, which was used to provide air conditioning for all facilities, build two middle schools, improve other facilities, and add more technology to classrooms.
- Proposed and campaigned for a successful \$96.5 million bond initiative in 2006, which was used for 24 major projects throughout the district.

**Program Development:**

- Led the development of an innovative approach to learning rooted in every classroom and driven by a district research team that focuses on analyzing formative and summative student data in reading, writing, math, and behavior.
- Created a district education team that collaborated with the Springfield community in the development of a new learning model that provided a framework for 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, including critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. Ensured integration of continuous improvement with the model.
- Led the development of an eighth grade science/math initiative with Mercy Health Systems, which supplied the classrooms and made resources available at the hospital itself.
- Partnered with the Discovery Center to create a fifth grade STEM program to improve the delivery of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics instruction with classes at the Discovery Center.
- Developed a Kids First Initiative to uncover replication of services and gaps in preparation for school.
- Implemented a Web-driven data warehouse that aligned the district with state standards and made performance data accessible to teachers, students, and parents 24 hours a day. Implemented a formative assessment series (SP5) to encourage data-driven decision-making.
- Managed the development of procedures for the evaluation of curriculum, review and selection of textbooks, educational materials, and field testing of materials and techniques.



**PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE*****Program Development:*** (continued)

- Created a district research team focused on supporting innovation in the classroom.
- Initiated and/or facilitated various choice programs, including International Baccalaureate and Pre-IB degree programs (315 high school students), Middle Years program (535 middle school students), Primary Years program (548 participants), A+ programs (3,549 participants), WINGS gifted education program (590 elementary students), Middle Years Scholars program (118 participants), BRIDGES gifted education program (75 students), WOLF, Middle College, and Project Lead the Way, among others.
- Led the development of Middle College (located on the Ozark Community College campus in Springfield) to target students dropping out of school. Combined both traditional and virtual classes with intern opportunities in diesel mechanics, health services, and child care. Graduated 60 students in 2013.

***Community Interaction:***

- Built a strong level of confidence and trust among the community, teachers, and administrators.
- Initiated student, parent, teacher, and senior citizen monthly advisory teams for the superintendent.
- Increased community satisfaction by 30%, according to biannual community surveys conducted by Springfield Public Schools.

***Professional Development:***

- Developed teacher academies in partnership with local universities/colleges to provide additional student teacher training and development in Title I schools.
- Leading the development of district and site leadership for the deployment of common core standards and smarter balance assessment in both Kansas and Missouri through the Kansas/Missouri Superintendents' Forum and in partnership with Dr. Willard Daggett of the International Center for Leadership in Education.

***Continuous Improvement:***

- Deployed the Malcolm Baldrige continuous improvement system, making it part of the district's DNA over the past seven years. Brought 23 Baldrige examiners on board. Focused the system on putting students in charge of their own learning.
- Partnered with the Missouri School Boards Association, Missouri Association of School Administrators, University of Missouri Department of Education, and several major school districts in the state to deploy the Baldrige system throughout the Missouri education system.
- Introduced and deployed a continuous improvement initiative based on the Plan/Do/Study/Act (PDSA) process.

***Student Achievement:***

- Realized significant increases in student achievement by tightly aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff development, technology, community partnerships, and governance.
- Grew the graduation rate from 78% to 85% by implementing a persistent graduation initiative.
- Recorded the district's highest student attendance rate in more than 20 years.
- Increased student engagement in the classroom by implementing an innovative entrepreneurial WOLF program, which led to creation of the Career Pathways initiative.
- The district consistently places on Missouri's "Top 10 Highest-Performing Schools" list for achievements in communication arts and math (over 10 schools).
- Springfield seniors who took the ACT achieved an average composite score of 22.6 compared with the national and Missouri average composite scores of 21.6.
- District free and reduced lunch students outperform average students in Missouri across the board.

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (2000–2005)****Colorado Springs School District 11, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Led the largest school district in southern Colorado with a vision and passion for student growth through programs grounded in research and data (61 schools, 31,000 diverse students, 1,800 teachers, and 1,300 support and administrative staff). Used a systematic approach to building ownership, which was critical in shaping the district's educational vision.



**PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE****Leadership:**

- Developed comprehensive teacher, administrator, and school board assessment programs concentrating on personal and professional development and rooted in formal and informal observation, consumer data, and self-assessment.
- Actively participated in school events and increased the visibility of administration by visiting every teacher in the classroom.
- Motivated administrative staff and teachers to commit to the common cause of educational excellence, and empowered both teachers and students with heavy accountability.
- Organized school board retreats to help bond the board and integrate newly elected members.
- Minimized conflict and developed an open working relationship with the teachers union.
- Implemented Stephen Covey leadership principles to build interdependence among teachers and staff.

**Strategic Planning:**

- Developed a powerful, five-year strategic plan to anchor thinking and align the system to focus on student achievement, safety, a highly qualified and diverse workforce, community, and the effective/efficient use of resources.
- Created and implemented a new capital plan, technology plan, and development plan.

**Fiscal Accountability:**

- Developed and managed an annual operating budget of more than \$300 million.
- Placed spending power in the hands of each school site in order to get resources as close to the students as possible.
- Championed the passage of a \$26.5 million annual mill levy override and established an oversight team to assure the community of responsible spending. Won the override in a community where 87% of households have no children in school.

**Key Initiatives:**

- Designed and implemented aggressive new standards for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Implemented Malcolm Baldrige continuous improvement principles to improve the delivery of service to the district's true customer—the student.
- Deployed a Professional Learning Community so that teachers were not "teaching to" but "learning with" the student.
- Encouraged the use of technology and data to improve the quality of teaching and decision-making. Facilitated a major shift in the use of technology in the classroom. Implemented Parent Connect to provide parent access to online report cards.
- Wrote *Knowing and Growing Your Kindergartner* to be used as a parent guide for preparing students for school.
- Created unique school sites that offered choice and encouraged community involvement.
- Directed and sustained the development of charter schools within the district to initiate innovation and provide alternatives for families.
- Introduced sounding boards to build consensus within the community. Met monthly with representatives from teachers, principals, support staff, parents, students, senior citizens, and the business community.
- Served as a resource for the media; convinced *The Gazette* to make education their number one priority for five years.

**INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT (1999–2000)****Academy School District 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Assumed responsibility for a 17,000-student district in financial trouble due to a lack of revenue and mismanagement of funds and growth. Hired specifically to strengthen staff morale and to pass the mill levy override.

- Made presentations throughout the community to explain the current state of district finances and provide some assurances of what the future would hold.
- Met with school board members and organized a board retreat to help bond the newly elected representatives.
- Campaigned for a \$12 million mill levy override that returned the district to solid financial standing.



**PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE****Academy School District 20 (continued)**

- Collaborated with Central Office personnel to address the issue of staff morale through honest, open communication.
- Met with parent and teacher sounding boards, Academy Education Association, student councils, school board, classified liaison group, senior volunteers, corporate CEOs, and the district accountability group to develop strategic plans and create solutions to district problems.
- Focused the staff to address the needs of students, improved morale in the district, and motivated the staff to become excited about the future.

**PRINCIPAL (1998–1999)****Liberty High School, Academy School District 20, Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Managed a high school with 1,200 students. Led initiatives to improve curriculum, instruction, administration, school climate, and academic achievement. Hired, supervised, and evaluated both teaching and administrative staff.

- Initiated a spirit of change that led to a sense of community and a new focus on student academic achievement and positive behavior.
- Created a safe academic atmosphere in a school with a very negative school climate by implementing a strategy of caring and high expectations where teachers focused on catching students doing good.
- Succeeded in revitalizing the staff and building consensus among teachers, community, and students.
- Shaped and implemented the CARES program, an initiative based on the Boys Town Education Model that helps teachers manage their classrooms and provides a proactive way to manage behavior.
- Developed and implemented innovative programs that made Liberty a magnet in the district for the advanced placement diploma program.

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS (1996–1998)****Archdiocese of Denver, Colorado**

Directed the operations of a school district with 15,000+ students in 40 schools.

- Launched a major capital campaign to raise \$66 million to fund the construction of three new schools.

**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION (1987–1996)****Girls and Boys Town Schools, Omaha, Nebraska**

Led the educational programs of this historic center for the treatment and care of abused, abandoned, and neglected boys and girls. Managed the Flannigan alternative high school. Consulted with major metropolitan school districts throughout the United States to provide guidance on gang deprogramming. Consulted with Native American educators in South Dakota and New Mexico.

- Developed major reforms, restructured the system, and focused it on student achievement.
- Helped to develop the Boys Town Education Model that is now used by schools across the country for systems alignment, behavior management, and diversity integration.
- Spearheaded efforts to increase the quality of instruction and student activities.
- Implemented solid staff development and performance evaluation systems.
- Developed a reading research center that improved the reading performance of the students by two years for every one year of reading instruction.

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION (part-time) (1991–1996)****Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska**

Taught graduate and undergraduate students studying for degrees or certificates in education. Developed course content, examinations, and presentation materials.

- Designed the learning environment to meet educational development requirements, adapting teaching style to accommodate both individual and group learning styles.
- Taught the Boys Town Education Model—The Well-Managed Classroom, Classrooms with Character, and Safe and Effective Secondary Schools.



**HONORS**

- Educator of the Year, Colorado Springs NAACP
- Entrepreneur of the Year, Colorado Springs Economic Development Corporation
- Educator of the Year, Notre Dame Club of Omaha

**COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**

- Missouri Quality Award, Board of Directors
- Missouri School Boards Association (MSBA), Superintendents Advisory Council
- Missouri-Kansas Superintendents' Forum, Board of Directors, President (2011–present)
- Southwest Missouri School Administrators, Board of Directors
- Mercy Hospital, Board of Directors, Ethics Committee, Quality Committee
- The Kitchen, Board of Directors
- Drury University, Board of Trustees
- Every Child Initiative, Advisory Board—A *Springfield News-Leader* Initiative
- Springfield Civility Committee
- Springfield Early Childhood Coalition, Board of Directors
- YMCA, Board of Directors
- Urban Development, Board of Directors
- Community Leadership Forum
- Discovery Center, Board of Directors
- Catholic Campus Ministry, Board of Directors
- United Way, Board of Directors
- US Bank, Advisory Board
- Deacon, St. Joseph's Catholic Church

**CONTINUING  
EDUCATION**

- Certified as a Malcolm Baldrige Examiner
- Boy's Town Education Model (motivation systems, effective teaching strategies, administrative intervention, and cooperative learning)
- Cognitive Coach / Executive Coach
- Common Core and Smarter Balance Training (Sue Gendron and Willard Daggett)
- Instructional Theory into Practice (ITIP)
- Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement (TESA)
- Diversity Training (Springfield Chamber of Commerce)
- Dale Carnegie Courses
- Whole Brain Assessment
- Kansas University Learning Strategies
- Leadership Forum, Center for Creative Leadership
- Stephen Covey Certified Trainer
- Equivalent to a Master of Theology Degree, Creighton University (1988–1991)

**Marc V. Maness**  
400 E. Walnut, Springfield, Missouri 65810  
Phone: 417.827.5449  
Email: marcvonmaness@mac.com

**Professional experience:**

2013-Present     **Research Specialists at Opinion Research Specialists**

**Highlights as Research Specialist**

- Conducted year-long research for the Special School District of St. Louis County to assist in development of a stakeholder-focused strategic plan.
- Conducted multiple research projects for The Children's Guild of Baltimore to assess potential for new school development, stakeholder satisfaction and assessment of climate for existing schools.
- Assisted team led by Dr. Norm Ridder for school improvement projects for Mehlville Public Schools (St. Louis County, MO) and Joplin Public Schools (Joplin MO).

2008-2013     **Director of Communications and Strategic Planning, Springfield R-12 Schools**

Springfield Public Schools is currently the largest school district in Missouri. As Director of Communications and Strategic Planning I was responsible for all internal and external communications, partners in education, the district strategic plan (SP5), and the communications planning and citizens' committee school relations on all bond and levy campaign efforts.

**Highlights as Director of Communications and Strategic Planning**

- Developed bond and levy communications plan assisting in passage of over \$200 of bond projects and two successful levy increases.
- Developed and implemented Springfield's strategic plan, SP5, resulting in an increase of 25% approval of stakeholder perception of how the district "planned for the future"
- Through patron feedback during strategic planning process, created and assisted in implemented "SPS Choice" programs, included the Wonders of the Ozarks Learning Facilities (WOLF) program.
- Created and implemented district strategic plan dashboard as a way to communicate to patrons our progress on key goals, indicators and measures of the strategic plan.

1999 to the 2008     **Director of Communications, Springfield Public Schools**

1984 to 1994     **Sixth Grade and Secondary Gifted Education Instructor, Camdenton R-III Schools.**

**Education:**

1999-2002             Missouri State University (*M.A. in Communications*)  
1986-1988             Drury University (*Certification as Gifted Education Teacher*)  
1984-1986             University of Central Missouri (*Certification as K-8 Teacher*)



1978-1982

University of Central Missouri (*B.S. in Mass Communications*)

**Selected Honors and Organizational Activities:**

- Community Relations Department Awarded NSPRA Excellent Rating on bond and levy campaign (2013)
- Springfield Council of PTA's Distinguished Service Award (2013)
- Served on City of Springfield's strategic planning committee (Vision 20/20) (2000-2008)
- Leadership Springfield Class of 2006



## OPINION RESEARCH SPECIALISTS, LLC

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**Mark C. Ellickson, Ph.D.**, earned his degree in Political Science (Southern Illinois University—Carbondale, 1986) and was the University's first Morris Doctoral Fellow. Dr. Ellickson is professionally trained in statistical and survey research methodology and serves as a tenured, full professor in the MPA program at Missouri State University where he teaches graduate-level courses in applied statistics and research methodology. He has published extensively in the area of survey research, presented at numerous state and national conferences on this topic, presented statewide workshops on survey research design, and has served as a statistical consultant for the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

**Since 1991**, Dr. Ellickson has served as President of Opinion Research Specialists (ORS), a full-service survey research company offering a broad range of research services to clients requiring high quality data collection and analysis. ORS has conducted hundreds of research projects for school districts, community colleges, city and county governments, utility companies, public libraries, banks, hospitals, and non-profit organizations. The ORS staff consists of 15 members, including a senior staff of five highly qualified individuals all of whom have either a Ph.D. or master's degree in the disciplines of political science, communications, marketing, psychology, or geography including a professionally certified GIS professional (GISP).



# Michael Maness



Michael Maness is a leading thinker on innovation, media and the transformational impact of the Internet.

Michael became the first ever Innovator-in-Residence at the Harvard Business School. The position was created as part of the Digital Initiative at HBS, an effort that brings together leading scholars and practitioners to explore the re-invention of business in a digital, networked, and media-rich environment.

Michael's exploration and research investigates why innovation fails or thrives in business cultures.

Prior to his current role, Michael was the Vice-President of Journalism and Media Innovation at the Knight Foundation. This \$2.5 billion private foundation is

dedicated to creating informed and engaged communities and is the

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## SUBCULTURE

Human-Centered Transformation   Origin

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largest funder of non-profit journalism in the United States. While at Knight, Michael managed an active portfolio of over \$125 million of projects dedicated to driving the digital transformation of the media field. He was also the chair of the Knight Enterprise Fund, an active investor in for-profit media start-ups. The fund's value more than doubled under his leadership and he continues as an active advisor.

Before his work at Knight, Michael was the Vice-President of Design and Innovation for USA Today and Gannett, a Fortune 500 company and one of the largest media companies in the U.S. In that role, Michael introduced human centered design and disruptive innovation approaches to the organization. He oversaw the investment and creation of several start-ups including *The Bold Italic*, a digital brand created to re-imagine local news coverage. The site won multiple awards and is part of the permanent collection at the Denver Institute of Art for excellence in design.

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## SUBCULTURE

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He is Board of Trustees for the Newseum in Washington D.C. and on a former member of the Advisory Board for IDEO, one of the worlds leading design companies. and the Media Advisory Board for the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum in New York City.

Michael is a co-founder of Subculture.

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## SUBCULTURE

[Human-Centered Transformation](#) [Origin](#) [Community](#) [FAQ](#) [Contact](#)



Dear Search Committee,

I met Dr. Ridder when I was an elected school board member in Joplin, MO, in my second year of my three year term as we were searching for an interim Superintendent. Our school system was not in a healthy state regarding our business culture, school board behavior and academic performance areas. Dr. Ridder was charged with a multi-faceted challenge. His approach to problem solving was very thorough.

Dr. Ridder began his assessment of our school district as soon as he arrived, making himself very visible and approachable in the entire community. He invited all stakeholders in our community to participate in the solution. At the time of Dr. Ridder's arrival to our community there was a high level of distrust in our school system from employees, parents and community members. Dr. Ridder set that as a priority from day one.

I am a nurse practitioner and I work with orthopedic surgery patients. I appreciated the thoroughness of the assessment phase of "diagnosing" our school system issues. Dr. Ridder did not simply rely on his years of experience; he supported his decisions with data collected from all the stakeholders and kept the school board engaged in the plan. This plan was then carefully implemented and evaluated with changes made as the need arose.

There were difficult changes to make and Dr. Ridder kept the board informed every step of the way. He led the school board and community through the process of change.

When I was checking Dr. Ridder's references before hiring him in Joplin, one such reference described him as a "Healer". After working with him to resolve our issues in our school district, I would also describe him as a "Healer". His integrity is unquestionable and his experience is vast. We are a better school district from having had his leadership! I would gladly take any inquiries about Dr. Ridder's performance while in Joplin, MO.

Respectfully,

Lynda Banwart

417-540-2836

lala@cableone.net



Dear Search Committee,

December 2017

I was so pleased when Norm asked me to write a letter on his behalf. No doubt you will have many fine candidates to consider for your open position, however, I am confident that Dr. Norm Ridder will be unrivaled in the vetting process conducted by your committee. I use the word "unrivaled" because I believe Norm's skill set is just that...unrivaled.

I came to know Dr. Ridder after being appointed to serve on the Joplin School Board by the Jasper County Commissioners in April 2015. Our school district was in a state of shambles and turmoil following the May 2011 tornado that hit Joplin. Buildings had been replaced but the emotional aftermath of rebuilding half of our schools had taken a toll...we had lost focus on the education of our children. Our problems were systemic and entrenched. Norm Ridder was hired as Interim Superintendent of Joplin Schools to "fix" things. In two years' time Dr. Ridder had quietly gone about his business and transformed our district...he had righted the ship.

Dr. Norm Ridder brings a remarkable skill set to the table. He is uniquely equipped and suited to work in either the public or private sector. As a *Baldrige* examiner, he is quick to analyze and identify strengths and weaknesses within a system. He then systematically but compassionately begins the process of change. He does not shy away from the tough decisions but is quietly decisive. His adept understanding of building consensus with various stakeholder groups may be his greatest attribute. His management style is one of "servant leadership" with razor-sharp intuition, analytic skills, systematic decision-making and relentless consensus-building. During the hiring process, one of his references characterized him as a great "healer" ...I would wholeheartedly concur with that assessment.

Should you think that the "skill set" I reference is a mere collection of acquired skills or tricks of the trade...they are not...they are the very fabric of this man. During the past year I lost a 3-year-old granddaughter to brain cancer. This was well after my stint on the Board. During that time, Norm and his wife were *there for me*, calling regularly and even visiting us at Children's Hospital in Aurora, Colorado over the holidays. I share this as illustration of the sensitivity he will employ as he brings profound and fundamental change to your organization.

It is without reservation that I recommend Dr. Norm Ridder for employment with your organization. He will be personally invested in the welfare of all the stakeholders he serves. I am confident you will find him to be a true asset to your business whether it be in the public or private sector.

Best Regards,

*Sallie Beard*

417-529-9574

sallie.beard@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Dr. Norm Ridder for a superintendent position. I have served on the Springfield, Missouri, school board for 21 years. I was a member of the board when Dr. Ridder was hired and was privileged to serve with him for his 9 years in Springfield.

When we hired Dr. Ridder, the board gave him 2 main priorities. They were: Gain support of the schools from the business community and the public at large; Carry out a plan to improve achievement at all levels. When he retired from the district, both had been accomplished. He created a vision of what this district and the community could accomplish for their children and he set the plan in motion. Because of his positive leadership and vision the district was able to pass levy increases as well as numerous bond issues. Dr. Ridder seemed to be everywhere in the community when functions were held and spoke about our schools. He did not leave our school sites out of the plan. He visited every site at least twice each year which is no small task when we have over 50 schools. Dr. Ridder possesses the uncanny ability to walk into a classroom and assess within a short time if learning is taking place and at what level. His positive attitude about learning and children is contagious.

I have heard the term "servant leader" used many times but until I worked with Norm I thought it might be overused and not really true. He is the definition of a "servant leader" because he served our students, staff, and community faithfully and never put himself in the spotlight. It was always about others and what they did or could do.

Our accomplishments as a district became evident at the state level and after a few years we were being asked to speak not only at conferences but to legislators on topics which were consistently improving our system. Choice schools, data driven decision making, continuous quality improvement, community involvement, online classes, and technology learning are just a few of the many areas where the district was recognized as a state leader.

If you need someone to lead your school district with the skill set Dr. Norman Ridder possesses, there would not be anyone better to serve your students and community. I would recommend him to you with no reservations. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Bruce Renner  
Springfield Missouri School Board Member  
brucepat@sbcglobal.net  
417.839.1732



April 6, 2016

To: Dr. Norm Ridder

Dr. Ridder, I am very pleased to provide this letter of recommendation to you as a Superintendent and as a friend. As a member of the Mehlville School District, I saw your leadership and organizational skills first hand as our Superintendent. As President of the Missouri School Boards' Association (MSBA), I have watched the positive impact you have had on the Joplin Missouri school district.

In a letter of recommendation, the usual course of action is to acknowledge and affirm the skills and successes of a Superintendent as the education leader of the district. I'm going to take a different approach. I'm going to describe the specific experiences my school district had with Dr. Ridder as our Interim Superintendent and the positive impact he had on the district as a change agent as well as an education leader.

I first met Dr. Ridder six years ago when he was the Superintendent of the Springfield Missouri school district. As a member of the MSBA Board of Directors, we extended an invitation to Dr. Ridder to give us an overview of the Springfield school district with an emphasis on student achievement and process improvement. He was able to explain difficult concepts in a very straightforward way. As a board, we realized Dr. Ridder had a great command of identifying school processes and finding ways to improve them.

Little did I know that in 2014 the Mehlville School District would have the opportunity to interview and select Dr. Ridder to serve as our Interim Superintendent. His commitment to us was that he would develop a strategic plan in six months that would serve to guide the school district. The only thing Interim about Dr. Ridder was the title. He served us with a full commitment to the education of our students as well as developing a strategic vision for the district. He did an excellent job of delegating authority to members of the Central Office cabinet and to the building Principals.

Dr. Ridder's challenge was to help develop a strategic approach to school district governance. The Mehlville School District had a Board of Education that did a good job of governing with a near-term perspective, with some board members trying to adapt a more long-range vision and some board members wanting to deal with day-to-day issues. There was also a lack of cohesion between the community and the school board.

Dr. Ridder used his vast experience in Process Improvement to work this problem. There were three key steps in this process:

- Identification of the community's understanding and perception of the school district. He used a Board-sponsored survey to determine that the community approved of the school district and the teaching staff, but had concerns with the board of education and finances. Dr. Ridder's emphasis of this data collection was the baseline for the entire improvement process.
- Organization of focus groups to educate the public on school district operations, finance and school board responsibilities. Dr. Ridder's expertise in leading the groups and encouraging conversations and suggestion led to improved understanding and information. The groups included parents, students, teachers and frequent voters.
- Development of a Strategic Plan based on the survey and focus group results. Dr. Ridder did an excellent job of pulling the survey results and focus group information together. The resulting

plan was a clear statement of the priorities for the district: student achievement, teacher support, and effective & efficient operations.

The Strategic Plan was adopted by the School Board in 2015 and has served as the compass for our decisions and direction. It served as the basis for improving community relations, and the passage for a tax levy in 2015 – the first levy increase since 1986.

Based on my experience with Dr. Ridder, his expertise and superior ability to communicate with people gives him the agility to manage the educational mission of a school district as well as continually examine and improve the vision and strategic plan of a school district. It is without any reservations that I give my full recommendation for Dr. Ridder.

Respectfully,

Larry Felton  
Member, Mehlville R-9 School District Board of Education  
President, Missouri School Boards' Association



# MISSOURI SOUTHERN

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## STATE UNIVERSITY

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### EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

December 29, 2017

Dear Sir or Madam:

It is my great pleasure to provide this recommendation letter at the request of Dr. Norm Ridder. I have known Dr. Ridder since 2015 when he arrived as the interim superintendent of Joplin Schools. During his two years of service, I had the opportunity to work with him on numerous occasions and observe his interactions with the school board, teachers, and community leaders.

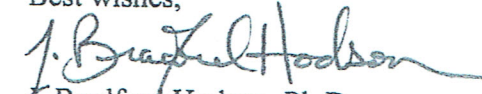
Dr. Ridder came to Joplin at a time of significant mistrust between the community and the Joplin Schools, both board and administration. Dr. Ridder's arrival as interim superintendent ultimately led to a 24-month period of healing, trust-building, and even growth in the district. Time and time again, Dr. Ridder proved his ability to listen, bring together differing points of view to a common vision, and keep the district moving forward.

At the time of his appointment, the voters in Joplin had twice in two years voted the school board president out of office. In 2015, two "reform" candidates had been elected and three additional board members had been appointed by the county commission because the school board lacked a quorum. Given that situation and not knowing Dr. Ridder at that time, I wasn't sure what kind of leader would accept such a challenge. However, I quickly realized that Dr. Ridder possessed the poise, diplomacy, and leadership abilities to navigate those stormy waters.

His work educating the inexperienced majority of board members on their role and his role as superintendent was masterful. He did it in a quiet way that neither offended the board nor raised concerns with the faculty or community. While that alone would have justified his appointment as interim, Dr. Ridder was far more than a caretaker superintendent. He launched a strategic planning process that brought together disparate stakeholders and resulted in a blue print for Joplin School's future. Such an accomplishment in two short years given where he started is practically unbelievable, but I had the pleasure of watching it all unfold under his leadership.

While I have no knowledge about what organization Dr. Ridder seeks to lead, I do know that his proven skills in healing by listening and leading through challenges will benefit whatever organization is fortunate enough to attract his attention. If I can provide additional information regarding my interactions with Dr. Ridder, I would be happy to do so at your convenience.

Best wishes,

  
J. Bradford Hodson, Ph.D.  
Executive Vice President